

## TWENTY-FIVE YEARS AGO\*

### EXCERPTS FROM OUR STATE MEDICAL JOURNAL

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From Some Editorial Notes:

**Purely Abuse.**—The American Medical Association has stimulated medical organization and medical betterment in every portion of the United States during the last ten years. To say that it has distinctly improved the standard of medical education and medical efficiency, is to put the case mildly. It has built up the foremost medical journal in the world. It has, for the past five years, steadily worked toward the clearing away of a mass of imposition, fraud, dishonesty and trickery that has been foisted upon the medical profession by grasping commercialism. . . .

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**A New Shame.**—And now comes "The Pacific Coast Hospital Association," "A progressive modern enterprise that combines money-making with a great public benefaction." The offices of the institution are in the Union Savings Bank Building, Oakland, and it seems to be presided over and generally managed by one McCullough Graydon. A booklet just received is most illuminating. The scheme, of course, is the same old "dollar a month" medical-treatment-contract business. . . .

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**Medical Defense.**—Last year, at a meeting of the House of Delegates, a committee was appointed to investigate the question of the State Society undertaking the defense of its members in malpractice suits, and to report at the San Jose meeting. . . .

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**Curious Changes.**—It is most singular how, under the operation of either the Federal Pure Food and Drug Law, or the various state pure food and drug laws, the statements in regard to drugs or medicinal preparations will change. . . .

From an article on "Antisepsis and Asepsis in Surgery," by W. W. Beckett, M. D., Los Angeles.

From the wide range of subjects, for a brief address before this society, it seemed to me that I could select none more appropriate than the title of this paper. . . .

From an article on "Amebic Dysentery," by J. D. Long, Past Assistant Surgeon U. S. P. H. and M. H. S.

Heretofore amebic dysentery has been considered almost entirely a disease of tropical countries. . . . In 1907, while on duty at the United States Marine Hospital at San Francisco, the writer found three cases of dysentery which, as far as could be determined from the history of the cases, originated in San Francisco or vicinity; the thought then occurred that probably the disease had secured a foothold here, on account of the large number of persons arriving here each year from countries where the disease is known to be endemic. Before it was possible to study the matter further, other duties intervened and the matter was dropped till last year.

From an article on "Latent Tuberculosis: Its Symptoms, Treatment and Prognosis," by Dr. Max Rothschild, San Francisco.

The attention of the general practitioner ought to be called to a complex of symptoms which is not generally known—the latent tuberculosis. . . .

\* This column strives to mirror the work and aims of colleagues who bore the brunt of society work some twenty-five years ago. It is hoped that such presentation will be of interest to both old and new members.

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## BOARD OF MEDICAL EXAMINERS OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA\*

By CHARLES B. PINKHAM, M. D.

Secretary-Treasurer

### News Items

"Sweeping investigation of the 'health racket' in Los Angeles was ordered today by District Attorney Buron Fitts. Names of more than one hundred persons who have purchased 'insurance' policies for as high as \$45, each assertedly guaranteeing \$25 weekly during unemployment because of illness or injury, but actually fraudulent, are in the hands of Fitts, he revealed. In all, thousands of persons are believed to have been victimized by these smooth-talking salesmen of the bogus concerns." (Press dispatch, dated Los Angeles, May 4, 1934, printed in the San Francisco *Call-Bulletin*, May 4, 1934.)

"Legislation to combat unethical advertising by medicine fakers over the radio was recommended yesterday in a report of the Board of Medical Examiners to Governor James Rolph. The need is clearly shown, according to the report, in the \$100,000 damage suit filed by a Redwood City woman against the manufacturers of a reducing compound. She charges that several months after she started taking a reducing compound, she collapsed in a critical condition. . . . Investigations were conducted by the Board in eighty-seven cases during April, eleven violators were arrested, seven of whom were convicted. Eyesight swindlers using fake radium drops were reported in southern California." (Los Angeles *Illustrated Daily News*, May 7, 1934.)

"Where does artistry end and toe doctoring begin? This highly technical aspect of caring for the human 'dogs' has been settled by U. S. Webb, State Attorney-General, in an official opinion given to the State Board of Medical Examiners. It appears that some of the cosmetologists have been chiropoding, and their activities have been brought to the attention of the state board. The 'cosmos' are the decorative branch of the foot culturists. The 'chirops' are the trouble shooters and repair crew. According to Attorney-General Webb, they must not overlap. A 'cosmo' can clean, trim and tint toenails until the cows come home, but he must not, under any circumstances, remove knots, unwind corns, extract bunions or treat infections. The minute he does he becomes a 'chirop' and must have a state 'chirop' license. 'Chiroping' without the proper license brings state penalties. In the light of the Attorney-General's decision, 'cosmos' will have to watch their step from now on." (San Francisco *Chronicle*, April 28, 1934.)

Of passing interest in connection with the recent exposé of health and hospital associations is an article entitled "Bilking the Public—New Rackets, Frauds, Fake Schemes," printed in the *Police and Peace Officers' Journal*, April, 1934, issue, said article being contributed by the San Francisco Better Business Bureau, wherein the following cases are cited: "A few days ago an old, gray-haired man called at the bureau office and with tears in his eyes told of the death of his wife, whose passing had left him entirely alone in the world. This man explained that his wife had taken out a health association policy many years ago in a local health concern, and had paid them the regular premium ever since. Several months ago she became ill and breathed a sigh of relief when she thought of the policy which would be the means of providing medical aid. Her husband telephoned the company and the association doctor appeared at their home. A cur-

\* The office addresses of the California State Board of Medical Examiners are printed in the roster on advertising page 6.

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